



U.S. Department of Justice
United States Attorney
Western District of New York

Further inquiries: (716) 843-5814

138 Delaware Avenue
Buffalo, New York 14202

PRESS RELEASE

January 21, 2005

RE: UNITED STATES v. ANTHONY CERRONE AND STEVEN MARKLE

United States Attorney Michael A. Battle announced today the convictions, after jury trial, of ANTHONY CERRONE, age 39, of Niagara Falls, New York, and STEVEN MARKLE, age 43, of Niagara Falls, New York. The jury convicted both men, who are members of Laborers Local 91 out of Niagara Falls, of attempted extortion in connection with a violent attack of a rival union in September, 1998. The attempted extortion convictions, relating to violations of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1951(a) and Title 18, United States Code, Section 2, carry a maximum penalty of 20 years imprisonment, a fine of \$250,000.00, or both.

Michael A. Battle, United States Attorney for the Western District of New York, in 2001 and 2002, filed federal racketeering and extortion charges against a total of sixteen members of Laborers Local 91. These defendants were accused of committing a variety of acts of violence upon non-union and union members who belonged to different trade associations. To date, one of these

men has been convicted of racketeering, while the present two defendants have now been convicted of attempted extortion.

Assistant U.S. Attorneys William J. Hochul, Jr., and Brett A. Harvey, both of whom handled the trial, stated that the defendants were convicted for having participated in a violent attack upon four members of the Bricklayers Union based in Buffalo. The attack occurred on September 16, 1998, during the construction of a new Wegmans food market on Military Road. According to the trial evidence, as many as twenty members of Local 91, including the defendants, descended upon the Wegmans and proceeded to violently attack four Bricklayer union members who had been performing tilesetting work at the site. The attack, according to the charges and evidence, was designed to either drive the tilesetters out of town, or get them to give aspects of their jobs to the Laborers.

The conviction was the culmination of a long term investigation on the part of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, under the direction of Special Agent In Charge Peter Ahern; the Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General; the New York State Police, under the direction of Major Thomas Askey; the Niagara County Sheriff, under the direction of Sheriff Thomas Beilein; and the Niagara Falls Police Department, under the direction of Superintendent John Chella.

Sentencing is scheduled for April, 2005, in front of Hon. Richard J. Arcara, United States District Court Chief Judge.